

the Ecumenical COURIER

REES AND PETER ADDRESS FRIENDS

"Who is Responsible for Refugees?" was the title of the address given by Dr. Elfan Rees at the annual meeting of the Friends of the World Council of Churches which took place at the Alison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City on December 9.

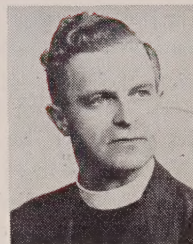
The original and the ultimate responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem lies with governments and their actions in the international community," said Dr. Rees. "It was governments who decreed the partition of Korea, China, India, and Germany and thereby created the largest segments of the world's refugee problems. . . . Tracing the historical causes of this tragedy to government action or inaction does not relieve Christians of their responsibility for its victims. There is laid upon churches a concern for refugees which must be an abiding element in our ministry for as far as we can see."

Dr. Rees is the permanent representative in Europe of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and Advisor on Refugee Affairs to the World Council of Churches. Each year he is in the United States for several months to attend United Nations sessions as a representative of non-governmental organizations on refugee affairs.

Professor James F. Peter of Queensland, Australia, was another speaker at the luncheon



Dr. Rees



Prof. Peter

meeting. He is a lecturer on theology and church history in Queensland and spoke at the meeting on "The Ecumenical Role of Churches Facing both East and West."

"What is often referred to as the 'Far East' is for us in Australia the 'Near North' and . . . geographically if in no other way, we are an Asian country."

"An event of great significance, not only for the life of the Churches but for the life of the nations, took place when the East Asian Christian Conference showed a desire to have the Australian and New Zealand churches as members of the Conference. In this there is expressed a sense of kinship which has not yet been manifested in the political sphere."

Greetings from Ghana were presented to the meeting by Dr. Christian Baeta who is the Henry W. Luce Visiting Professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York during this academic year. Dr. Baeta is a vice chairman of the International Missionary Council and mem-

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Off the Book Counter

Communism and the Theologian, A Study of an Encounter by Charles C. West, Berlin representative of the WCC for two years, now director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. A first-rate presentation of the battle between two opposing dynamic forces, assessing both Christianity's weakness and strength in the struggle. 400 pp. \$6.00. Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa.

Christians and the State by John C. Bennett. 302 pp. Scribner's, New York. \$4.50. Dr. Bennett is the Dodge Professor of Applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Few men are better qualified to discuss the modern aspects of this important subject.

What the Christian Hopes for in Society edited by Wayne H. Cowan with a foreword by Reinhold Niebuhr (Association Press, New York, 125 pp. \$5.00.) Selections from *Christianity and Crisis*.

Ethics and United States Foreign Policy by Ernest Lefever (Meridian Books, New York, 199 pp. \$1.25.) A book dealing with concrete issues not abstract theorizing on a subject of world, as well as national, importance.

Christians in the Arena by Allen A. Hunter (Fellowship Publications, Nyack, N.Y., 108 pp. \$1.50.) Short biographies of exciting contemporaries such as Grueber, Trocme, Niemoeller and Soper who have "brought a living faith in the Gospel of love to bear against . . . war and totalitarian tyranny."

The Church, the Ministry, and Reunion by W. Norman Pittenger (Seabury Press, Greenwich, Conn., 147 pp. \$2.75.) A study of the issues of reunion in light of the discussions of the Church of South India now underway in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The Nature and Mission of the Church by Donald G. Miller (John Knox Press, Richmond, 134 pp. \$1.25.) A discussion of the Church. "True faith in Christ is exactly the same thing whether the one who has it be a Quaker, a Congregationalist, a Presbyterian, or an Anglo-Catholic."

In Every Place A Voice by Walter G. Muelder (Woman's Division of Christian Service, Cincinnati, 121 pp. \$.65.) A study book suitable for any church group interested in applying WCC statements to local situations.

Two feature stories from the Information Department in Geneva deserve special mention:

"The Liberties of Protestants in the Latin Countries of Europe," by Giorgio Peyrot, Director of the legal bureau of the Waldensian Church in Italy. A first-rate and timely survey of the problems of religious liberty in Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and certain Swiss cantons. \$.10 each

"The Contribution of the Russian Orthodox Church to Christian Unity," by Prof. Edmund Schlink. An excellent discussion of a little-known aspect of a church about which most Americans know very little. \$.10 each

The Official Handbook—A special illustrated guide to the WCC issued by the Geneva office. The first of its kind. \$.50 a copy

All three may be ordered from the WCC, 156 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 10, N.Y.

Honorable Mention

On October 29 *The New York Times* told the story of seven people adrift in a rowboat on the Adriatic Sea, apparently Yugoslav nationals fleeing to Italy, who were picked up by the U.S. tanker *Valley Forge*. As the rescued people had no passports, they could not be landed, so—Mr. J. S. Someck, president of the company which owns the ship, "said he was sending a cable . . . asking the assistance of the World Council of Churches. The agency has played a big part in the resettlement in the West of refugees from Eastern Europe."

This is a testimonial to our world-wide refugee service which entitles us to take a bow. Sharing the honors are the countless thousands of generous friends who have made it possible for the WCC to render such service.

Inter-Church Aid: World Youth Projects

Young people around the world are participating in interchurch aid through their own World Youth Projects, a joint program of the World Council of Churches and the World Council of Christian Education.

Through the World Youth Projects program, church youth groups in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Trinidad have joined youth groups of the U.S.A. in raising scholarships for American Indian youth in mission schools to attend camps and conferences. Young people from the Philippines, Thailand, and Austria are joining



Ecumenical youth teams are among the ways in which young people are participating in interchurch aid. Their activities range from construction work to leadership training courses.

with U.S. youth groups to make possible a pilot project for teen-age agricultural migrants—America's displaced people.

Trouble Grows in East Germany

Refugees from East Germany report worsening of the religious situation there in recent weeks.

Closer cooperation between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the renewed crisis has been advocated by the participants at a meeting between Protestant and Roman Catholic journalists at the Evangelical Academy in Tutzing. They agreed that the situation in East Germany is so serious that all the forces of Christianity must coordinate their opposition to the "myths" of the Communist regime. The group urged intercessory prayers for the pastors and church workers who are in prison in East Germany.

IF —

you get an invitation to join the Friends of the World Council when you were practically one of the founders—PLEASE overlook the error. We are constantly trying to get new members and with our small staff we cannot check new lists properly. "You can heap fiery coals on our guilty heads by passing the 'invitation' on, accompanied by a note from you!," says Miss Antonia Froendt, promotion secretary.



member of the ecumenical Greek Team of young people which is helping to rehabilitate villages in Northern Greece. A special newspaper about the activities of these young people is available. Write to the New York office.

The Evanston Institute for Ecumenical Studies

An interesting experiment in ecumenical education in the U.S.A. has just been started in the city where the Second World Assembly of the WCC was held—Evanston, Ill. The "Evanston Institute for Ecumenical Studies" was opened in October with Dr. Roswell P. Barnes giving the dedicatory address.

The Institute will be a Christian study and research center, a place to which laymen will come for conferences on many aspects of a Christian vocation in the world, and where pastors can exchange ideas on their special problems. The first program lists such topics as: "The Responsibility of the Christian Layman in Our Modern World," "Christian Faith and Modern Art," "Commitment and Tolerance," "Religion and Ethics in Business Decisions" and, special for journalists and students in that field: "The Necessity of Dealing with Controversial Issues."

The World Council's Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland, and the study groups which prefaced the Evanston Assembly, inspired and more or less set the pattern for this new venture. The Evanston Institute is not under the administration or sponsorship of the World Council, however, but is an independent corporation re-

Ecumenical Essay Contest

The WCC Scholarship Committee in Geneva invites participation in an Ecumenical Essay Contest by "persons under forty years of age in 1959 who are engaged in full-time pastoral or missionary service." The theme is "The Prophetic Function of the Church in Society."

Essays should be 15,000 words in length. The deadline: September 30, 1959. First prize: 1,000 Swiss Francs or \$230.00; second prize: 500 Swiss Francs, or \$115.00; third prize: 250 Swiss Francs, or \$58.00.

For details, write to the Scholarship Committee at 17 Route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Miss Antoinette Froendr, U.S. Conference for the WCC, for gathering the material for this and the last issue of the *Courier*. The editor has just returned from a four-month trip around the world.

Responsible to a board of trustees composed of outstanding Christian leaders. For a program for the 1958-59 schedule and for further information, write to the director: Dr. Walter Leiber, 1558 Ridge Ave., Evanston, Ill.

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PERSONALS

A member of the Geneva staff of the WCC, Dr. Howard Schomer, has been named to the presidency of Chicago Theological Seminary. He will assume his new duties in January, 1959. A native of Chicago, he is a *summa cum laude* graduate of Harvard, with a B.D. from the seminary of which he is now to head. Dr. Schomer has been in Europe since 1946 when he was appointed to lead the Congregational Christian Mission of Fellowship to Europe. He has been on the World Council's staff since 1955 as Secretary for European interchurch aid.

Dr. Nick A. Nissiotis, of the Greek Orthodox Church, has begun his duties as assistant director of the WCC's Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. Dr. Nissiotis tutored at the Institute in 1956-57. He studied under Emil Brunner and Karl Barth and at the St. Thomas Aquinas Philosophical Institute at Bouvain, Belgium. He has his degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Athens.

His many American friends will be happy to learn that Dr. Oliver S. Tomkins, for a number of years the Secretary of the Commission on Faith and Order of the WCC, has been named bishop to the See of Bristol.

Our former executive secretary, Dr. Samuel Crea Cavert, gave the Hoover Lectures at the University of Chicago on the subject: "The Road to Unity." He is incorporating them into a book to be published in 1959.

And How About

Subscription* to the *Ecumenical Review*, the WCC quarterly? \$3 a year, an extra number with the first subscriptions. Ask for the July 1958 issue as your bonus!

(* Makes an acceptable gift for your favorite pastor, missionary, theological student.)

THE ECUMENICAL COURIER is a bi-monthly bulletin published by the United States Conference of the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Betty Thompson, Secretary for Public Relations, editor. The Council writes 171 Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant communions in 50 countries. Neither the COURIER nor the World Council of Churches is responsible for opinions quoted in its columns.



In Remembrance

In the last *Courier* we promised to give a review of the life of Bishop Bell, our revered honorary president, who died on October third. Below we reprint an evaluation of him made by our general secretary, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, in *Ecumenical Press Service*:

"On October 3, Dr. George Bell, Bishop of Chester from 1929 till 1958 died at Canterbury at the age of 75. In him the ecumenical movement loses one of its great pioneers who gave consecrated and uninterrupted service to the cause of Christian cooperation and unity for nearly forty years.

"He was one of the first to see the importance of the German church conflict and gave strong spiritual backing to the Confessing Church in its struggle for Christian freedom over against national socialism.

"The bishop was also a strong defender of the refugees. In the second world war his speeches—many of which were made in the House of Lords—were a constant reminder that, especially in time of war, the Christian conscience must be awake. His protests against obliteration bombing or against a revengeful attitude to the whole German people cost him a good deal of his popularity, but many saw after the war that he had been right.

"Bishop Bell had taken a considerable part in the process of formation of the World Council of Churches. In 1948 he was chosen as the first chairman of its Central Committee—a post which he held till 1954 when he became the council's honorary president, continuing, however, to attend its meetings and taking an active part in its life.

"Bishop Bell's sermon in Odense Cathedral, Denmark, in August, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the World Council of Churches, was his last public utterance. That sermon was on the text: 'We are unprofitable servants.'

"The World Council loses in him its most beloved leader who had done more than anyone to create that new spirit in and between the churches of which the World Council is the living embodiment."

Footnote to Disaster

A report from Beirut says: "Rifle fire and bombs are not the only threats to life in troubled Beirut. Behind the barbed wire and sandbags, hunger and disease are taking their toll after months of economic crisis for many thousands in the strife-torn city. Protestants, Orthodox, and Roman Catholics have formed an emergency committee to cope with the situation. The churches have already sent \$40,000 in aid through the WCC, but more help is needed—and soon."

1959 Week of Prayer For Christian Unity

The annual call to prayer for Christian unity during the week of January 18-25 has been issued by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches.

The appeal for 1959 recalls that "the world is confronted by the unfortunate spectacle of the most widely held period of prayer for Christian unity being observed by groups with apparently contradictory purposes and aims," but asks for realistic recognition of this "tragic division" and declares that "if our prayer avoided or ignored the reality of our tragic condition it would not be true prayer."

Suggested forms of prayer for the seven days of the week are included in a leaflet available from the New York office. They will again be used in more than sixty countries by church bodies, local congregations, lay men and women, theological students, and teachers, writers, speakers and broadcasters. United meetings for intercession and encounter between the confessions will be held in many local areas.

"Week of Prayer for Christian Unity"
(Jan. 18-25) is now ready. Sample copies
free. \$3 a hundred.

IN SEARCH OF ADAM

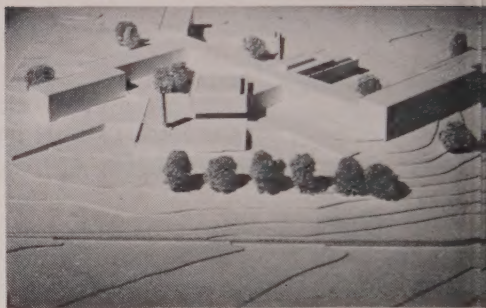
is the title of a fascinating book by Herbert Wendt, describing the quest for knowledge of man's earliest progenitor. We, too, have been looking back into our history to find our earliest contributor—and we think we've got him: he is

Mr. Otto Brueger
West Orange, N.J.

who has supported the ecumenical movement of the churches without interruption since December, 1930. His latest gift is dated November, 1958.

(If anyone has a longer continuous record of giving, we'd be glad to learn about it.)

Moving Days Ahead



Artist's model of the WCC Geneva headquarters

Coincidence ordains that both the New York and Geneva offices of the WCC may move into new quarters by 1960, if all goes according to plan.

The New York office of the World Council of Churches will rent a modest suite of offices in the Interchurch Center in New York City's Midtown Heights. The relatively small staff of the New York office will be on the second floor along with several other international organizations.

Our proposed new world headquarters in Geneva, however, will be housed in a modern building set in spacious grounds in a new developing section of the city near the headquarters of other international agencies.

The *Christian Century*, (Nov. 19, 1959) commenting on the reluctance to leave the historic chalet and other wooden buildings on Route de Malagnou in Geneva said "they (the staff) add that no one will be reluctant to have enough elbow room for a change, to be well and comfortable on bitter winter days, above all to be able to move from office to office on sunny days without first bundling up in overcoat and galoshes."

(Continued from page 1)

member of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. He served on the Coast Legislative Council and other governmental committees during the transitional period from colonial to self-governing status.

Mr. Charles P. Taft, Cincinnati, Ohio, chairman of the Friends of the World Council of Churches, presided.